THE NATION

DECEMBER 31, 1960 . . 25c

New York's Air Tragedy

CRASH OF A SYSTEM

Karl M. Ruppenthal

An Eight-Year Appraisal

EISENHOWER'S QUEST FOR PEACE

D. F. Fleming

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LETTERS

Hope for the Losers

Dear Sirs: Those of us who were stunned by the loss of Porter, Meyer, Johnson, Kasem, Weir and Wolf will rejoice at Congressman Porter's declaration that "we [Peace] Congressmen" will try comebacks in 1962 [*The Nation*, Dec. 3]. The voices of such Congressmen are not altogether lost. It should be noted, for example, that a number of students from Harvard, Radcliffe, Boston University and Dartmouth spent three weekends campaigning in Vermont for William Meyer, a spontaneous gesture of support for his outstanding efforts in the cause of peace. This is to say nothing of the work of Peter Jacobson, a University of Chicago student who, on leave of absence, had already organized Vermont student support for the Congressman; and of all of the original and dedicated Meyer workers.

GENE KEYES '63
Harvard University

Cambridge, Mass.

The Electoral System

Dear Sirs: In connection with Mr. Ted Lewis' article on the Electoral College in your December 10 issue, I believe that the Electoral system's virtues far outnumber its faults. . . .

To reiterate the classic defense of the Electoral College, the popular vote is often almost impossible to tabulate exactly. There are vote frauds, miscounts, etc. In close votes, the election would always be in doubt and we would have no President for long periods of time. For instance, in the election of 1880, out of nine million votes a change of 4,500 could have reversed the result under the "direct election" system. In proportion even closer, the Kennedy-Nixon election could have been reversed by a miscount of only about 50,000 of the 64 million votes — just one district in a couple of big cities.

Also, Mr. Lewis' article is based on the assumption that the two-party system is eternal. This is certainly belied by history: the Republicans started out as a third party; then there are the Progressives, the Bull Moosers, the Populists and States-Rights (upon occasion, even the Socialists have received a million votes). In a three-party election, the direct election system is nationally almost unworkable, for no one party could ever get a popular majority. If we had gone strictly by popular vote, neither John Quincy Adams, Lincoln, nor Wilson would have been elected. If we wanted a majority President, we would have to eliminate candidates (which ones?) and hold the elections all over again, and then probably again and again. This would be ridiculous, unwieldy and completely unworkable. . . .

If the Lodge proposal to apportion the electoral vote on the first ballot according to the popular vote of the state were passed, then the inherent possibility in the Electoral system of having a popular-minority President would be almost entirely obviated, and the method would be completely democratic.

CHARLES W. LEBARON

Riverdale, N.Y.

The Statehood Question

Dear Sirs: Mr. Meisler runs shallow in his estimate of Luis Ferre's Statehood Party ["The Governor and the Bishops," Dec. 3]. For one thing, the issue of statehood vs. the current expedient of commonwealth status has profound consequences for the island's economic and social development and adequate political representation. For another, Ferre's program has a good deal to be said for it in terms of Puerto Rico's changing condition, if only his proposals were given a fair hearing by those who come to observe.

Your writer falls prey to the PPD's "maximum exposure" designed to convince visitors that Muñoz Marín represents the salvation and Luis Ferre the reactionary elements. In fact, Muñoz's regime can stand a good deal of criticism. Puerto Rico's economic achievements have been overrated and overattributed to Muñoz's Operation Bootstrap. Only the Governor's political deftness suppresses an intense insular nationalism and a deep-felt antipathy to the Yanqui. "Bread and butter" has kept the lid on his strong *independentista* sentiments and those of many in his party as well. All this is common knowledge on the island, though it may come as a surprise to mainlanders.

Such an attitude has not been without its policy impacts as instanced by the undermining of the English-language program in the elementary schools. Most Puerto Rican children now grow up unequipped to participate in the larger United States environment. The consequences have been repeatedly observed in New York City.

Puerto Rico could certainly have done much worse than Muñoz in the past decade. But his unreasoning opposition to statehood which, among other deprivations, keeps several million American citizens from having national representation, his depressing autocratic bent, and a growing indication that the PPD has spent itself — these are some factors that call for a change.

RALPH NADER

Winsted, Conn.

In This Issue

EDITORIALS

513 ●

ARTICLES

516 ● Crash of a System: New York's Air Tragedy
by KARL M. RUPPENTHAL

519 ● Big Powers vs. the U.N.
by JANE STOLLE

520 ● Berlin Masquerade
by CHARLES H. NICHOLS

521 ● Eisenhower's Quest for Peace: An Eight-Year Appraisal
by D. F. FLEMING

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

526 ● Comedy Before Tragedy
by RICHARD FOSTER

527 ● Celestial Politics (poem)
by ARCHIBALD MacLEISH

529 ● The Boys in the Sub-Basement
by BENJAMIN DeMOTT

530 ● Art for Morality's Sake
by FAIRFIELD PORTER

531 ● Theatre
by HAROLD CLURMAN

531 ● Music
by LESTER TRIMBLE

Crossword Puzzle (opp. 532)
by FRANK W. LEWIS

George G. Kirstein, Publisher
Carey McWilliams, Editor
Victor H. Bernstein, Managing Editor
Robert Hatch, Books and the Arts

Harold Clurman, Theatre
Maurice Grosser, Art
M. L. Rosenthal, Poetry
Lester Trimble, Music

Alexander Werth, European Correspondent

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NEW YORK, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1960
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THE NATION

EDITORIALS

The Fetish of Continuity

There is a startling contrast between the way the change in Administration is regarded at home and the way our allies, and the neutrals, not to speak of our opponents, regard it. Among American commentators, the emphasis is largely on the need for continuity, a smooth transition, and avoidance at all costs of any disruption of policies — symptoms of anxiety more fitting for an elderly maiden lady than a great country. Abroad, the motif is a hopeful, perhaps only wistful, desire that the United States should discard those of its policies which, over a period of a decade or more, have proved their unworkability. Indeed, the change-over in administrations is a golden opportunity to get out of the bear traps in which every administration, whether of a country, corporation, or institution of learning, in time becomes enmeshed. To err is human, to defend one's errors is equally human and even more damaging, and still worse is the inability to see one's errors. When a new President is elected, his duty is not to his predecessors, however worthy and dedicated, but to the people of the United States. It is precisely revaluation and discontinuity that is the purpose of elections; otherwise the President might better serve for life, as indeed Alexander Hamilton, a political prophet but something of a monarchist, proposed in the early days of the Republic.

Another reason for President-elect Kennedy's full utilization of his power of review and change is that the United States is the first country in the world to bring a new generation to governmental power, and to give the young and the young-middle-aged a chance to see whether they can do better than their fathers. The average age of the new President and his Cabinet will be 47.5 years. If those elected to and selected for high office cling timidly to the old ways before they reach fifty, the United States is a good deal sicker than *The Nation* thinks it is.

A group of thirty-two distinguished historians at twenty-three American colleges and universities have adopted the view that now is the time for a change, especially in foreign policy. Among them are Edward Burns at Rutgers, John W. Caughey and Kenneth M. Stampp at the University of California, Thomas Cochran at the University of Pennsylvania, William A. Williams at the University of Wisconsin, Ray A. Billington at Northwestern, Richard L. Watson at Duke, William L. Neuman at Goucher College, Robert H. Ferrell at Indiana, Norman A. Graebner at the University of Illinois, Alexander DeConde at the University of Michigan, and Paul A. Varg at Michigan State. "As historians," they write, "we urge that the dead hand of the past not be allowed to determine the future. . . . A time comes in the history of a nation when only bold and imaginative leadership can assure national survival and the preservation of national ideals. The United States faces such a time. The continued loss of American initiative in your Administration would result in declining world influence and possibly a disastrous thermonuclear war." They recommend in particular a program for a nuclear-test ban, diplomatic recognition of Communist China, and diplomatic recognition of the government of East Germany as a prelude to the solution of the Berlin question. No one expects Mr. Kennedy to do all these things at once, but we can expect him not to shrink from considering them.

Civil Defense

A DC-8 jet airliner that had been in collision with a Super Constellation plunged into a Brooklyn street. It wrecked a church, sheared off the tops of a few brown-

DEC 28 '60

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stones, and set fire to eleven other buildings. In the houses and on the street, five persons were killed and four injured. Witnesses describe the scene as an inferno. Many thought there had been an air raid or that a missile had fallen.

But it was not a missile or even, by World War III standards, a major incident. Houses within a few yards of the point where the wrecked aircraft came to rest were undamaged. The toll of victims on the ground was no greater than that of a single major accident. In terms of TNT, the human and property damage was not in the class of a well-aimed 10-ton blockbuster of World War II. The effective energy release was probably much less than that of a 5-ton bomb; thus a rather small thermonuclear device of 5-megaton rating would have destructive power at least a million times greater. A million! If the power of a child's toy train were multiplied by a million, it could propel an ocean liner or supply electric power to a city.

Among the officials who rushed to the scene of the Brooklyn disaster was the New York Civil Defense director, Robert E. Condon. General Condon turned in a city-wide disaster alarm which brought out 500 auxiliary police, firemen, first-aid personnel and other civilian defense workers. The Red Cross set up a shelter and canteen and provided 400 pints of blood. The Salvation Army supplied doughnuts and coffee to the rescuers. Boy Scouts served as messengers. All this, of course, was in addition to an army of regular police and firemen who did the real work of coping with the disaster.

If a nuclear bomb had actually landed and produced the million or two million-odd casualties which Civil Defense delights in enumerating after each of their periodic drills, none of these amenities would have been available. Most of the policemen, firemen, physicians and CD auxiliaries would have perished with their wards, the wreckage would have covered most of the borough, there would have been neither streets for transit nor hospitals for the injured, and radioactivity would have further paralyzed whatever efforts might have been made to fight the conflagration and aid survivors. When the inhabitants of New York, or any other large city, hear the air raid sirens, they should either weep in anticipation of the catastrophe they are doing so little to prevent, or laugh at the Lilliputian bureaucrats who try to keep up the pretense that anything would or could be done for them.

The Remedy Is Abolition

On January 3, 1961, the opening day of the 87th Congress, any member of the House may offer an amendment to the rules to abolish the Un-American Activities Committee. A major vote on such a motion would rid the country of the twenty-two-year-old abomination that the committee is known to be. Rep. James Roosevelt has indicated that this time he will make the necessary motion — he has proposed it before — only if he is assured of Congressional support. Action need not be taken on the opening day; resolutions can be introduced for later consideration.

For several years, the Un-American Activities Committee has received an annual appropriation of $327,000 — one of the largest granted any committee. The committee's request for funds will come before the House Administration Committee and then before the House itself. *Any* member of the Congress can protest against the appropriation by appearing before the House Administration Committee and by voting against further funds when the matter comes before the full House. *Any* member of Congress can make a speech against the committee merely by asking for the necessary time. *Any* member can introduce editorials, resolutions, petitions or other expressions of opposition to the committee as part of the Appendix to the *Congressional Record*.

Here, then, is a project for all those who share *The Nation's* detestation of the committee and its activities. Contact your Congressman now. Let him know how you feel about the committee. Let him know that you know that he can easily voice a protest against it in one or all of the means indicated. Twenty-two years' experience demonstrates that this particular body cannot be disciplined or reformed; the remedy is abolition. Abolition is a word that still reverberates in the American political tradition. It carries the stamp and imprint of a glorious chapter in our history. It can serve once again as the spur to action against manifest injustice; it can be given new currency and relevance. The time has come to set in motion the forces that will in time result in the abolition of the Un-American Activities Committee.

No Irreparable Loss

John A. McCone, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, has announced that he intends to resign from the commission when the Kennedy Administration takes office on January 20. It may not be a charitable view, but many observers of the atomic scene will feel that Mr. McCone will serve his country better in taking leave of the job than he did in assuming it. He can take credit for some administrative reforms and for working out agreements with foreign nations for nuclear research and industrial applications. But whatever good he has done has been vitiated, not so much by his insistence on resuming nuclear testing—he is entitled to his opinion on that issue—but by the vicious methods he has used to further his policy. For some months he has been asserting, without evidence, that the Russians must be violating the *de facto* test ban, because, in McCone's view, it is to their interest to do so. In the present atmosphere of international tension,

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such accusations have the same force as if they were backed up by evidence. Newspapers like the New York *Daily News* transform McCone's surmises into fact: McCone has repeatedly warned, Jerry Greene writes from Washington, "that the Russians undoubtedly were cheating on their own version of a test ban and catching up with the U.S. in new weapons." *The Nation* has it on the highest scientific authority that there is not the slightest reason, on the basis of classified or unclassified data, to believe that the Russians have been testing nuclear weapons. Not only has McCone been unscrupulous in this respect, but he has been a thorn in the side of the State Department which, for perfectly sound policy reasons, has taken the attitude that the American position in the eyes of the world would be grievously compromised by unilateral resumption of testing.

Nowhere are new ideas and courageous thinking more urgently needed than in the field of atomic energy. The appointment of a chairman to succeed Mr. McCone, and the filling of the other vacancy on the AEC, are fully as important as some of the Cabinet offices President-elect Kennedy has filled. Some highly eligible names have been mentioned, among them Harrison Brown, the brilliant professor of geochemistry at the California Institute of Technology. Brown is young, imaginative, highly respected among scientists, and versed in politics as well as in his vocational field. Senator Kennedy could go farther and fare worse.

Zeal Goeth Before a Sprawl

The objections that have been raised to the appointment of Robert Kennedy as Attorney General — nepotism, inexperience, the fact that it is not advisable in purely administrative terms to have the Chief Executive's brother in the top law-enforcement position — are not, in our view, decisive. The basic objection is that Mr. Kennedy has repeatedly demonstrated a form of zeal that, in law enforcement, is always dangerous and frequently self-defeating. Law enforcement calls for vigor, diligence, courage and persistence; zeal, however, is a disability. It is just as much the Attorney General's duty to protect the rights of citizens — even despised citizens — against illegal law-enforcement practices as it is to prosecute the guilty. As counsel for the McClellan Committee, Mr. Kennedy was quite willing to indulge in practices which offended both the letter and the spirit of due process. He engaged in personal vendettas; he made it known that he was out to "get" named individuals.

The law can be enforced with a scrupulous regard for Constitutional rights; indeed, this is the only effective enforcement policy. It is an everyday occurrence for American courts to reverse judgments — the Apalachin conspiracy case comes to mind — in which convictions were secured by questionable methods even where, as in the Apalachin case, the prosecutor was aware of the dangers and tried to guard the rights of the defendants. Mr. Kennedy is a young man and the responsibilities of his new office may work changes in his tactics and disposition; we hope they will. But he will seriously compromise the new Administration if he demonstrates in his new office the zeal and animus that he exhibited as counsel for the McClellan Committee. Years ago, in *The Devil's Dictionary,* Ambrose Bierce defined zeal as "a certain nervous disorder afflicting the young and inexperienced. A passion that goeth before a sprawl."

The Saga of the Headless Prawns

When Harry Truman slapped a total embargo on U.S. trade with Red China in 1950, he made Hong Kong a customs inspector's paradise. If the inspector, usually located in Honolulu or an American port of entry on the West Coast, suspects that an imported article has come from Red China, he may seize it without proof. "The returning tourist or importer," writes Igor Oganesoff in *The Wall Street Journal,* "must prove that he did not commit the crime of buying Red Chinese merchandise, if he brings in goods bought in Hong Kong." Hong Kong has become, in effect, a Red Chinese port, although the British cooperate with the Americans in keeping it as free as possible of the malign influence which so horrifies American statesmen.

To this end, certificates of origin are furnished to the Hong Kong manufacturers or purveyors of goods which otherwise are indistinguishable from the Red Chinese product. Hong Kong exports about $100 million worth of goods to the United States annually. Of this sizable volume, more than four-fifths is certified to be free of the Red taint. This does not necessarily mean that the materials were not made or grown in Red China, only that a certificate was duly made out so stating.

As is only natural under the circumstances, a certain amount of funny business goes on; a further complication is that the British, while cooperating, are less squeamish than the Americans when it comes to the Red virus. Thus the British have made an arrangement for a water supply from Red China which will be "commingled" with the native Hong Kong water, of which there isn't enough. Mr. Oganesoff, who seems somewhat lacking in the proper attitude in such serious matters, asks whether the U.S. Navy, whose destroyers and aircraft carriers frequently take on supplies in Hong Kong, will commit the clearly illegal act of filling their tanks with Communist water. Without wishing to tell the Navy what it should do, *The Nation* feels strongly that this water should be de-commingled before it is fed to American seamen or American boilers.

It is distressing to report, however, that attempts to

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segregate, tag and register Hong Kong ducks have failed — a U. S. consular official said it was "hopeless." On the other hand, a signal success was achieved in the case of prawns, of which 4.25 million pounds were sold to the United States in 1958. By arrangement with the British, Hong Kong prawns were decapitated before crating, thus distinguishing them from Communist prawns. But one day an American consular officer who had occasion to visit Hong Kong's central fish market, was thrown into consternation when he saw that more than a third of the displayed prawns, mostly from Red China, were headless. The export of prawns was forthwith cut off, and America was saved from a deadly menace.

Christmas in Tokyo

Each year, a little louder than the year before, conflicting voices are raised on the point of whether Christ can be, should be or is being "kept" in Christmas. Is the holiday being celebrated as a religious festival or a pagan rout; are businessmen fostering or corrupting the human virtue of generosity; is it a violation of civil rights to require public school children to lend their voices to hymns in praise of a savior whom their faith does not recognize as such? Every year at Christmas time, Christ becomes a controversial figure.

Except in Japan. David Brinkley, reporting on TV from Tokyo earlier this month, showed scenes from the department stores there that closely resemble the panoramas of chaos to be found in Macy's, The May Company, Neiman-Marcus or Magnin's from Thanksgiving to Christmas Eve. The same nylons, cameras, perfumes and slippers; the same artificial snow and public-address carols; the same strained crowds buying against the threat of being caught short of benevolence on Christmas Day. But in Tokyo, of course, the embarrassing question of Christ does not arise, since a Christian is about as common there as a Democrat in Westchester. In Japan, Christmas is no more a religious holiday than Mother's Day here—it is openly a device for getting the merchandise off the shelves.

So it is perfectly possible to celebrate Christmas without Christ. And it might be preferable to do so. Church historians do not really know when Jesus was born; could they not search their records again and offer a date—say in November or February—that would be as plausible as December 25? Then those disposed to reflect on the spiritual and historical significance of the event might do so unharried by the exhaustion of ritual trinket exchange and unoffended by the strains of "Holy Night" blaring from the doorways of record shops and dime stores. As matters now stand, we mark the birth of Lincoln with considerably more reverence than we give to the birth of Christ. Can't we find a non-commercial spot on the calendar for the Child of Mary?

NEW YORK'S AIR TRAGEDY

CRASH of a SYSTEM . . *by Karl M. Ruppenthal*

ONCE AGAIN disaster has struck from the air, bringing grief to hundreds of families and a deep feeling of shock to everyone in the nation. At least 132 persons were killed, including several bystanders: a street sweeper, a church caretaker, two Christmas-tree vendors. Several buildings were demolished, a dozen others set on fire. In the height of the melee, police found it necessary to rope off ten blocks of the city. Law suits and insurance claims may well aggregate close to $150,000,000. Without question, the Brooklyn-Staten Island crash constituted the worst air disaster in the history of commercial aviation.

One wonders how such a tragedy could have happened. There is more at stake here than this single crash, however fateful it turned out to be. It may be that our air-safety system itself is at fault. If this is so, and unless the fault or faults are remedied, similar tragedies are bound to recur with increasing frequency as air traffic continues to burgeon.

About the Author

Karl M. Ruppenthal writes about air transport not as a theoretician, but as an airline pilot who has been flying commercial planes since 1942. In his off hours, he lectures on transportation and management at Stanford University and has been posting *Nation* readers regularly on what they should know about air travel. This year the following pieces by Mr. Ruppenthal have appeared in these columns: "Tomorrow's Air Crash" (January 30), "Can Your Copilot Fly?" (April 2), "The Field the Pilot Trusts" (May 14), and "Bumping the Passenger" (June 25).

WITH all possible speed, skilled investigators from the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) sped to the crash sites in Brooklyn and Staten Island. Eleven other agencies from various government units also sent men to assist. By law, the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) is responsible for the safe conduct of air traffic and the promulgation of safety rules. But when accidents occur, it is the CAB, an entirely different agency, that is charged with determining the cause. Civil-aviation agencies have not always had this clear-cut division of responsibility. Until

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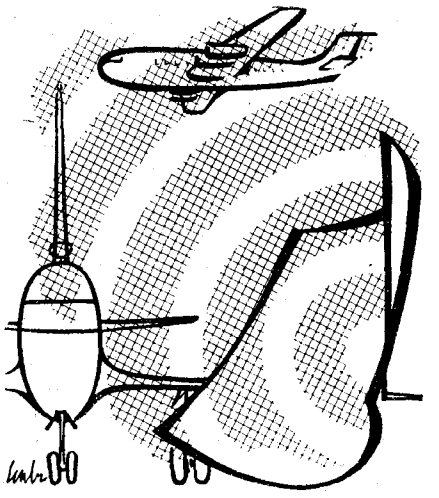
recently, the CAB not only made the safety regulations, but also investigated accidents. But a system which establishes a single body to act as both legislator and judge is obviously bad. The CAB, acting as judge, was not likely to feel that the CAB, acting as legislator, had at any time been at fault.

In 1958, all this was changed. When the FAA assumed the powers of the now-defunct Civil Aeronautics Administration, it was given absolute powers to make safety and traffic rules. It has unquestioned responsibility for the safe conduct of planes flying under instrument flight rules (IFR). The CAB has been left with the primary job of investigating accidents after they have occurred.

Are the safety procedures laid down by the FAA adequate? That is the larger question which the current inquiry into the Brooklyn-Staten Island tragedy must establish.

All such inquiries include certain routine investigations: the qualifications of the crew members involved (health, certifications, etc.); whether the crew members complied with all regulations and had the legally required rest periods prior to their flight; the mechanical condition of the planes and any log-book history that might prove relevant; weather conditions at origin, destination and en route; clearance, routing and the amount of fuel on board the plane or planes, and a host of additional relevant aspects of the flights.

In Brooklyn and in Staten Island, more delicate and time-consuming investigations have begun. Skilled engineers and technicians are gathering every bit of wreckage of the two planes. They are hunting for instruments, recorders, bent pieces of metal. Reconstruction procedures may enable them to determine the angle of impact and other important facts. Also being investigated are the electronic transcriptions of the clearances given the planes and other important bits of conversation between crew members and airport officials. Today, all communications from controllers to pilots are recorded for just such eventualities. Putting all the information together,



including the last known geographical positions of the planes, their air speed and the strength and direction of local winds, it should be possible to compute where the collision occurred. It may be many months before all fragments of evidence are collected and finally conjoined. Here are some of the things that the CAB investigators will discover.

PROMPTLY at 7:40 A.M. on the morning of Friday, December 16, TWA's Constellation Flight 226 originated at Dayton, Ohio. An hour before scheduled departure, Captain Wollam and his crew arrived to begin preparations. While the engineer checked the plane, the pilots reviewed weather, winds and other pertinent information. The dispatcher's release indicated that after its usual stop at Columbus, the flight would continue to New York.

There were low ceilings and snow in the East — a condition relatively common during the winter months. Hours earlier, TWA's New York dispatcher had reviewed weather conditions and forecasts and had computed the fuel required. The captain, making his computations independently, determined how much fuel he would take. On this point, the captain is the ultimate judge, except that he may not take less fuel than the amount specified by the dispatcher. When the flight left Columbus, it had sufficient fuel to fly to New York, to circle for some time in the holding pattern, then to return westward — if need be — to land at an alternative airport, still with plenty of fuel on board.

On the ground at Dayton, the pilots planned their flight. Taking account of wind, fuel requirements and weather, they selected the best route and altitude. On their flight plan, they indicated their air speed, desired routing and other pertinent information. This was transmitted by teletype to the Airways Traffic Control Center in Indianapolis. There the appropriate controller coordinated the information with other traffic and reserved a specific altitude for the flight. When the plane departed the ramps at Dayton and Columbus, the control-tower operator relayed clearance to the pilot. At Columbus, the clearance may well have read something like this:

> ATC clears TWA Flight 226 to the New York LaGuardia Airport via Victor airway 12 to Harrisburg, Victor 162 to Allentown, then Victor 5, Victor 123. Cross Roscoe at 3,000 feet, then maintain 17,000 feet. Maintain runway heading for two minutes after take off, then radar vectors to Victor 12.

The pilot acknowledged the clearance by repeating it back to safeguard against the possibility of error. As the plane broke ground, the Columbus tower operator relayed the time to Indianapolis Airways Traffic Control. Seconds later, the Indianapolis controller alerted Pittsburg Center that the flight would be entering its area midway between Columbus and Pittsburgh. At Philipsburg, Pennsylvania, the flight was "handed off" to a New York controller.

Because of the tremendous volume of traffic in the New York area, the work load is highly segmented. One controller has jurisdiction over traffic on the route from the vicinity of Philipsburg to Allentown, where control is normally again shifted. About this time, the plane comes under radar surveillance, and still another controller has jurisdiction. On a flight from Columbus to LaGuardia, the pilot may be in contact with a dozen different controllers, each responsible for a particular bit of airspace.

Approaching New York from the West, it is usual to begin the descent above Allentown or thereabouts. Then the pilot is cleared to a rel-

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atively low altitude, sometimes to a holding pattern close to the airport. Sometime later, he is shifted to the LaGuardia Approach Controller, who gives him authority to commence approach. Once the plane is clear of clouds, or nearing the airport boundary, still another controller gives the pilot clearance to land. Reports presently available indicate that Flight 226 was cleared to Linden, N.J., to maintain 5,000 feet. Preliminary reports do not indicate whether jurisdiction had yet been transferred to LaGuardia.

MEANWHILE at Chicago, a United DC-8 was also readied for its flight to Idlewild Airport, New York. Veteran Captain Sawyer made careful preparations for his flight, planning his route and receiving clearance. In this connection, it is important to note that both TWA and United had long ago filed flight plans for all of their flights. Even on the clearest day they operate under instrument flight rules (IFR), thus requesting that airways traffic control reserve for them a particular bit of airspace for every flight. While the FAA does not require it, other lines, too, follow the conservative practice of always flying IFR. This gives the double protection that comes from the pilots' ability to see some planes in the air, plus the ground controller's ability to allocate airspace. Under bad weather conditions, all planes must fly in accordance with IFR. But on clear days, if every plane in the sky requested an IFR clearance, the system would be totally unable to accommodate them.

Normally, jetliners approaching New York start descending from their cruising altitude (usually 29,000 to 35,000 feet) somewhere in the vicinity of Allentown. The standard clearance is over Robbinsville, then northeast on the airway to Preston, New Jersey. From that point, there are several routes to Idlewild at the disposal of the ground controller. Newspaper reports indicate that this jet had been cleared to 6,000 feet, then to descend to 5,000. From as far west as Allentown jet flights are under radar surveillance. Apparently this flight was cleared to Preston, where it might be instructed to turn into the holding pattern before being allowed to proceed.

At 10:37 A.M., the DC-8 crashed in downtown Brooklyn. Minutes later the disabled Constellation plummeted onto Staten Island. Even before all the evidence is gathered, there are strong indications that the system broke down. Here are several things which might have occurred.

There might have been radar failure. Since these devices are electronic, they are subject to the same limitations as a radio tube or a light bulb. It is true that controllers have stand-by sets, but when one instrument gives out, precious time is required for the controller to shift his attention to another. In a closely-timed, critical situation, even a momentary failure might be sufficient to invite disaster.

Equally possible, and a good bit more probable, is that the radar set was "acting up." Radar is a marvelous device, but it too has limitations; in snow or thunderstorms, reception may be impeded. In crowded terminal areas, even momentary loss of contact may be serious.

Sometimes jets arriving over Preston are cleared to Idlewild via the Hempstead low-frequency range. This ancient audio facility is none too good even in the best of weather; in snow-static conditions its signal may be unintelligible. Such ranges have been known to "swing" and give false indications that tend to lure a pilot out of position. In this day and age there is really no excuse for using such antiquated radio devices. But the FAA sometimes still requires that they be used.

The possibility of human error cannot be ruled out. At the end of a hectic day of radar-watching, more than one controller has been known to become confused and to direct a plane to turn left when he really wanted it to turn right. If he is watching two or three closely timed situations, it is not impossible that he may momentarily lose his attention, or he may miscalculate a bit. Through this inadvertence a plane may continue on its last assigned heading when it should have been directed to turn.

Pilots, too, can make errors. Because of faulty instruments, poor communications or inadvertence, a pilot may drift off course. But if this should occur, the radar controller should be able to spot it immediately and help the pilot return to course. In this case, if either pilot actually did stray off course, there should be clear evidence of the fact. The controller's warning to the pilot should be recorded on the controller's tape. But here again another fact would be important: Did the warning come soon enough?

Eventually all these bits will be put together and the investigators will determine the proximate cause of this particular crash. And that is all they are required to do. But the actions thereafter taken will determine the likelihood of further accidents due to faulty traffic control. This happens to be the first collision involving pilots both of whom had filed flight plans and were flying in accordance with IFR. But the hazard of additional mid-air collisions is much too great. In a sense, it makes little difference whether there was a mechanical failure or human oversight in this instance. The fact is that the traffic-control system is so fragile that it allowed such an accident to happen.

IT IS ironical that such well-operated air lines as United and TWA have virtually no control over the collision hazards to which their planes are exposed. They may give their pilots the best possible training and insist on the highest maintenance standards, but in matters of traffic control, they are completely in the hands of the FAA.

To a railroad man, this situation may seem strange indeed. When two trains collide, there is little doubt who is responsible: It is the railroad itself or some of its employees. Every railroad controls its own right of way and is thus responsible for its traffic. Progressive railroads long since installed Centralized Traffic Control systems (CTC) which make collisions all but impossible. Understandably, air lines cannot each have its own system of traffic control; because of the tremendous number of planes in the skies and the complexities of modern-day traffic, utter chaos would reign. But the amazing thing is that the FAA has not yet developed a fail-safe traffic control

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system. On the best-equipped railroads, if an engineer dies or a controller steps out for a cup of coffee, the worst that can happen is that the trains stop running. No train proceeds unless there is absolute certainty that the track is clear. The fail-safe elements in the system guarantee that nothing will happen if any part of the system fails.

On the airways, no similar system is in operation. If the radar quits, or a radio fails, too much is left to chance. For far too much of his flight, the pilot is at the mercy of the system. He has no way of knowing how efficiently the individuals and the machinery directing him from the ground are operating.

Today some traffic controllers work under near-impossible conditions. They must make tremendous numbers of important decisions under the pressure of insufficient time. The job of coordination between one controller and another is enormous, and the coordination is not always accomplished. It is not surprising that some controllers develop ulcers. Others worry so much about the possibility of making mistakes that they quit the FAA.

It has not been many weeks since some officials in Washington were talking about the necessity of developing a supersonic airliner cruising at four times today's commercial speeds. But the pilots of the land can only hope that it is not developed too fast—at least not until our horse-and-buggy traffic-control system is thoroughly overhauled and is equipped to handle the planes we already have.

BIG POWERS vs. the U.N. . . . *by Jane Stolle*

United Nations

THE Fifteenth General Assembly ended as it began, seized with the Congo problem. In the intervening three months, the question was brought up, dropped and brought up again in the Security Council, the Assembly and — most frequently — in the corridors. In the closing days of the Assembly, Secretary General Hammarskjold told the delegates: "The item to which this debate refers is called 'The Situation in the Congo.' I do not believe that anybody is in doubt that for some the real issue might better have been called, 'The Situation in the United Nations.'"

What had begun as a promise for a brave, new world for the newly independent Congo ended in bleak failure as the Assembly rejected both of the two final resolutions dealing with the deteriorating situation in Leopoldville. The cold war had claimed another victim, and the Secretary General was in the direct line of fire. In the course of the debates, he was attacked openly by the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc; sniped at by some African nations that are in the painful, confusing period of transition from colonials to responsible world citizens; and, most distressing of all, undermined by the United States, which acted at times as if it were playing Trilby to a Soviet Svengali. If Mr. Hammarskjold was right when, in the course of the speech quoted above, he said that the Soviet aim was to "create conditions for a radical change of the administrative structure of the [U.N.] Organization and, with that in view, to corrode whatever confidence there may be among Members in the integrity of the Secretariat," the United States did all in its power — however unintentionally — to foster that end. The fact is that the Secretary General, who until this session of the Assembly opened had been generally considered as permanent a fixture at the U.N. as the flags flying in front of it, will in all probability not succeed himself when his term ends in 1963—if he doesn't resign before.

The United States failed to save Mr. Hammarskjold; and, by the same token, it encouraged rather than hindered Soviet ambitions to intervene in the Congo. America's open (and successful) machinations to seat President Kasavubu as the Congolese delegate in preference to Lumumba, despite many African doubts of the wisdom of the move, frightened the new nations. "*Is* the U.N. a tool of the United States and the former colonial powers with which it is allied?" they asked themselves. "Aren't we better off, struggling along on our own?" African votes on the two final resolutions are illuminating. On the Afro-Asian resolution, which asked for U.N.'s armed intervention to throw out the remaining Belgians, convene Parliament and restore Lumumba to power, only nine of the twenty-six African nations voted for, the rest abstained. On the U.S.-U.K. resolution, which in essence asked for a blessing on the *status quo*, not one of the African nations voted for, four voted against and the rest abstained (the resolution lost by one vote; the U.S. loss, measured in terms of African prestige, was immeasurable). Clearly the Africans are saying: "Hands off Africa — and that means everybody!"

So, between Belgium, France, the United Kingdom and the United States on the one hand, and the Soviet Union on the other, the U.N. has been stymied in the Congo. What a strange conjunction of forces! Of course, Western motives are clear. France's reason for keeping the U.N. out of the Congo can be spelled out in the one word, Algeria; Belgium's, in the Congo's production of 70 per cent of the world's industrial diamonds, 60 per cent of the cobalt, 10 per cent of copper and tin; Britain's, in Kenya, Tanganyika, the Central African Federation, etc.; and America's in NATO and the paralysis of a lame-duck Administration. Soviet motivations are perhaps less clear, but probably no less invidious; and, whatever they may be, they impelled the Kremlin to share, with the hated West, the responsibility for undermining the U.N.

The Congo question will reappear when the Assembly session resumes in March. One can only hope that a clearer and more adroit Congo policy will by then have emerged from the new Administration in Washington — and that the Congo will have withstood its present chaotic condition sufficiently to benefit from it.

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BERLIN MASQUERADE . . *by Charles H. Nichols*

Berlin

BERLIN is at the center of that cold war which is the symbol of our present malaise and anxiety. The recent antics of Mr. Khrushchev at the United Nations have seemed to justify the stern policies of John Foster Dulles: no compromise with the devil. Indeed, our foreign policy is geared to this notion. The Supreme Commander of NATO is now clamoring for its conversion into an atomic power—a proposal which instantly won the support of the West German authorities. While we in the West insist upon our peaceful intentions, we are steadily accelerating our preparations for war to the point of no return.

This fact is all the more distressing in that a new awareness of our common human problems seems to be developing both in the East and West—at least among intellectuals. A groundswell is developing beneath the politicians—the awakening of powerful intellectual and cultural forces on both sides of this divided world. If the cold war has intensified our suspicions and fears, it has also set in motion a vigorous competitive struggle for the minds and hearts of men.

Nowhere are the signs that this struggle is evolving in creative directions more clearly seen than in Berlin. Here, where East and West converge, enormous amounts of money and talent are given to trade fairs, exhibits, lectures, opera, theatre, concerts and cultural congresses on both sides of the Brandenburg Gate. Both zones of Berlin have their *Festwochen*. Berliners from both East and West mingle at the Brecht theatre and the America House library.

Of even greater significance is the fact that intellectuals everywhere in Europe (and surely in America) are subjecting their faith and their culture to a vigorous reappraisal. I can speak here only of Western Europe, but there is plenty of evidence that the same thing is happening in the East—especially in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Czeslaw Milosz, for example, who attended the recent Congress for Cultural Freedom in Berlin, spoke of this stirring in Poland. "However," he said, "when you hear that we are critical of the Soviet system, you must not think we have embraced the ideals of the West." The congress, held here last June, was notable for its serious confrontation of current issues. For me, its most exciting aspect was that the participants were earnestly seeking answers. We of the West saw clearly that if our heritage has any essence, we must extract that essence at this moment of history.

Representatives of the uncommitted nations spoke for themselves at the conference. The craving of Europeans for the good will of the emerging nations testifies to the depth of the moral concern professed by both East and West. When the Russians attack the massacre of the Sharpeville Bantus, or the Algerian War, they assume a moral position of considerable weight. Similarly, when we of the West express our horror over the cruel suppression of the Hungarian rebellion we, too, assume a moral position to which the rest of the world cannot fail to respond. There can be no doubt that there is some value in this watchdog function performed by both sides. Paul Robeson, speaking to the East Berliners, asserted that the freedom of Africa was made possible by the Soviet Union and Communist China. Though we do not accept Mr. Robeson's views, there is a sense in which he is right. In the struggle for the good will of the neutrals, no politician aware of the issues of our time dares support imperialism.

The Congress for Cultural Freedom was largely inspired and financed by Americans, but the *Fondation Européenne de la Culture* was established by Europeans and is largely supported by them. The *Fondation* held a fruitful seminar and congress in Copenhagen last October. Here again some of the most distinguished men in the Western world made valuable contributions. James Johnson Sweeney, for example, recently returned from a trip through Poland and Czechoslovakia, found "fresh regions of expression" on both sides of the iron curtain. The participants did not come to any final answers. But the spirit of inquiry, the facing of some of the realities, were clearly present. The day may not be far distant when concerned intellectuals from East and West will sit down together and a *modus vivendi* will emerge which the politicians will have to respect.

Americans can take pride in this waking up of the West to some of the major issues in our culture: The Fulbright Program, the bringing of American professors to chairs in American Studies in Europe, the Salzburg Seminar, the special lecturers' program of the Department of State (which sent such peoples as S. I. Hayakawa, Saul Bellow and others to Europe) and the efforts of the United States Information Service (which maintains America Houses in Germany where lectures, exhibits, concerts and the like are held) convey something of the vitality of American civilization.

BUT LYING athwart these hopeful gropings for understanding lies the heavy shadow of the four-power military occupation of Berlin. To many, this statement will sound foolish at best; at worst, treasonable. Certainly army personnel will resent it deeply, conscious as they are of the sacrifices they are making to remain here and elsewhere in Germany.

The fact is, however, that an army by its very nature must impose regulations and controls on its personnel and those of the Foreign Service (whom it dominates in Berlin) which create an unfortunate image of Western democracy and heighten tension. The presence of uniformed men, the daily maneuvers, the rumble of tanks in the streets are not calculated to make the United States, or any other of the occupying powers, seem peace-loving. On our own Armed Forces Day, a German waitress whispered to me, "It looks awfully militaristic to me!" The ordinary German who has lived through or heard about National Socialism will

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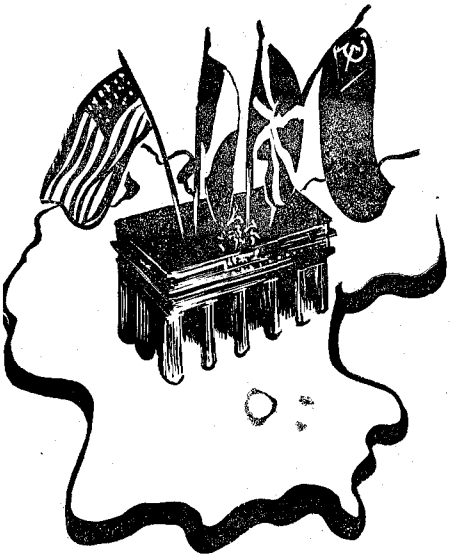
not easily see the difference between then and now. German society is still rather rigid and authoritarian. The Adenauer government (which has in its ranks some former Nazis), spurred on by America to rearm even to the extent of atomic weapons, is not likely thereby to move toward greater freedom. I have found it is only when a German goes to America or England that he really understands what the West means by a free society.

What of the Communist threat? I am not so naive as not to know that the Russians would like to swallow up West Berlin. But can they without a military attack? The fact is that Berlin obviously could not be defended in the face of a determined Russian assault, and it is madness to talk of risking atomic war over Berlin. I submit that we need not fear such a military attack by the Russians; they have nothing to gain by provoking atomic war. They are counting on the productive capacity of Western Europe, not its destruction; nor can they be looking with equanimity on the relative weakness that such a war would inflict on them with respect to Communist China. The way of wisdom for the West is to exact some really valuable concessions from the Soviet Union in return for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Berlin—with guarantees for the freedom of West Berliners.

If the armies were withdrawn, East and West Germans would find a way to closer cooperation. And the vast sums of money spent on occupying armies could be deflected into cultural efforts like the splendid programs of the USIS which, at this critical moment, has had its already inadequate budget cut by Congress. I am convinced that one America House does more to help win the cold war than all the American troops abroad. It is not Utopian to propose that a heightened intellectual and cultural effort be substituted for the present arms race. For the tragic outcome of our policy of arms-for-whoever - opposes - communism has surely been repeatedly demonstrated in China, Korea, Turkey, Japan and Vietnam. A basic principle of our democratic faith is the recognition that ordinary men respond to reason and humane ideals. To the extent that we can bring such values to the ears of those who live under totalitarian systems we have reason to hope for an easing of tensions.

THESE are the realities in Berlin today, and some American politician must soon be courageous enough to speak them out loud and clear. It is high time for the West to abandon the hope of maintaining peace and freedom in Europe by force of arms. As Marc Chagall said at the Copenhagen Congress of the *Fondation*: "Our unhappy life on this earth is not a masquerade, so there is no need to wear a mask. . . . Sometimes one feels it better to be a voice in the wilderness than one of those mul-



titudes who howl their approval from fear of seeming late for something."

We persist in the masquerade over Berlin, as if it were defensible. It is not as defensible as Quemoy and Matsu. If these realities are not faced, we shall indeed be too late for the world which is rapidly overtaking us, a world in which Africa, Asia and South America will have come into their own. That is why American foreign policy must henceforth concern itself more seriously with these emergent peoples and with their image of us. If they believe us to be genuinely peace-loving and free, they will draw upon our liberal tradition. But if they find us clinging to armaments, atom testing and threats of war, they will not only fly from our leadership, but will gird themselves to destroy us.

AN EIGHT-YEAR APPRAISAL

EISENHOWER'S QUEST for PEACE . . *by D. F. Fleming*

THE Eisenhower years are ended. What have they brought us in that great power struggle that we call the cold war? Have we lost prestige and power relatively? If so, can we restore our position? What is our future place in the world to be?

There cannot be any doubt that our relative position is weaker, but it does not follow that Eisenhower is to blame for all of the changes. Let us see what some of them have been.

The Military Record

In 1952 the United States military power was supreme over the earth. The Soviet stockpile of A-bombs was small; ours was large and we could deliver them by air from the ring of bases which we had forged around the Soviet Union. We could kill the Soviet Union, with virtual impunity to ourselves. Indeed, we had an "over-kill" capacity large

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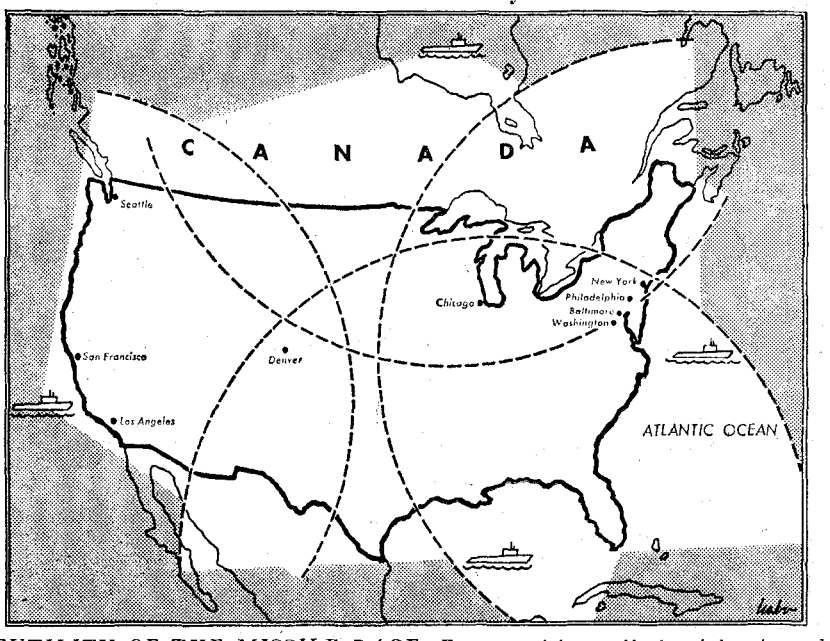
enough to wipe out everything of importance in Russia many times. However, it was no longer safe to do that, since the Soviets could visit havoc upon our European allies.

In 1952-53 both sides achieved the H-bomb, and the Russians followed it with a much more rapid promotion of intercontinental bombers capable of reaching the United States from home bases. They had a supply of these weapons first. Then in October, 1957, they launched the first of the increasingly heavy Sputniks into space, proving that they had both the power and the accuracy of aim to lay down hydrogen war heads on American targets. After that the size and proficiency of their Sputniks and Luniks steadily increased, until one was sent straight to the moon and another around it on a photographic mission.



FUTILITY OF THE MISSILE RACE: From positions off the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, in Hudson Bay and the Gulf of Mexico, Soviet subs can reach any part of the United States with 1,500-mile nuclear missiles.

MOSCOW NOW had two ways to reach America with H-bombs. In the third means, launching from submarines, we believe ourselves to be ahead with our nuclear-powered Polaris subs. Still, the Russians have by all odds the greatest fleet of submarines ever built on this planet, some 500 by now. The New Zealand Defense Minister recently reported that a pack of 100 of them was training down near the Antarctic. They must be presumed to have the ability to launch 1,500-mile missiles, which means that from all four sides of North America they can reach everything worth destroying in the United States. Anyone who wonders about the fourth side should note how deeply Hudson Bay extends toward Omaha and Chicago.

The Soviets have accordingly achieved the power to destroy us utterly, and by means not likely to be wiped out by an American "first strike." Yet we should not conclude that this could have been prevented by spending a few more billions for missiles each year. Our encirclement of the Russians gave them an impetus which the mere spending of more money would not have given us. As our nuclear scientists have so faithfully warned ever since 1945, the Russians were always certain to master our essentially nonexistent "secrets." What has happened is inherent in any arms race, even with weapons of annihilation.

Indeed Eisenhower deserves great credit for holding the arms budget down around $40 billion. He feared that our solvency would be undermined by huge, unproductive arms costs, and he frequently warned against drifting into the garrison state. Who is to say that these fears were not sound? Yet all his efforts to move away from the garrison state were defeated. He brought two of our most powerful businessmen to Washington, to ride herd on the Pentagon and police the budget; but both Wilson and Humphrey retired from the scene defeated, the latter warning of a depression that would curl your hair.

The efforts of the Eisenhower Administration to make our prosperity less dependent on arms-spending do not mean that we have been left defenseless. Though our bases abroad are declining in value, both politically and militarily, they still enable us to mount devastating attacks on the Soviet Union with both planes and intermediate missiles; that ability is increased by the Polaris subs and will be completed in a few years with intercontinental missiles.

President-elect Kennedy is committed to larger military expenditures. He apparently feels that they would strengthen his arm for negotiation. So they might, a little. But how much could they really do so, when the power to annihilate is already mutual? And what safety is there in adding to the already huge vested interests which profit by perpetuating the arms race? Can rising prices ever be stopped that way?

The first requisite for survival is a recognition that we can never again get security by military means.

Our Economic Position

As it is, Eisenhower has spent upwards of $400 billion on the cold war, including arms costs, and for several years the strain has been increasingly severe. There is a growing awareness that Uncle Sam is going in the red internationally. During the past three years our gold reserve has been reduced by $4 billion; foreign claims against our gold have been increased by $4 billion and now stand at $19 billion. We have left only $18 billion in gold and by law $12 billion of this must be kept on hand to back our money.

It would seem completely obvious that something must be done to balance our accounts, which show a surplus of $5 billion in goods and services exported.

In the $9 billion of "invisible" items the largest is $3 billion for

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military expenses abroad and another $1.6 billion for government grants, enough to account for the annual deficit.* That is why Treasury Secretary Anderson made a strong effort recently to induce West Germany, with her $2 billion surplus, to take over a large part of our heavy military expenses in Germany. The countries that we set on their feet at great cost in Truman's time are now doing better than we are. In West Europe their economies are growing twice as fast as ours. Why is Anderson criticized for "bumbling"? Could any Treasury head do less?

The plain fact is that we are overcommitted and over-extended, and we have been for many years. We have taken charge of more of the world than we can manage. The new Administration may be able to whip up our war-burdened economy enough to enable it to carry the load a while longer, but are we going to spend billions annually and forever to maintain largely artificial client states and armies around the two Communist giants?

The Containment-Liberation Record

In his 1952 campaign, Eisenhower shared with Mr. Dulles, though with fluctuations, the latter's demand that we advance from containment to the liberation of the East European countries. Containment was too negative for Dulles — there would have to be an advance to liberation. But despite such talk, we took no action when there was revolt in East Germany or in both Poland and Hungary in 1956. After years of exhortation over the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe, raised to a high pitch of intensity during the Hungarian tragedy, not a man or a plane moved, essentially because the President knew, as he had said on September 5, 1952, that "victory is impossible in a global war."

In the Far East, also, Eisenhower went along with the Radford-Dulles "unleashing" of Chiang Kai-shek to attack China, while the Seventh Fleet continued to protect him. Then when his blockade of the central China coast from the offshore islands resulted in the first Formosa crisis in 1955, we hung upon the brink of a world war for three months, until the public advocacy by U.S. militants of a war to crush China, on March 25, 1955, shocked powerful conservative forces into urging Eisenhower to call a halt. He did so and, with the aid of Senator George, we turned away from war to the first Summit conference in Geneva in July, 1955.

FOR MORE than six years Eisenhower left the conduct of the cold war almost entirely in Dulles' hands. Yet when Dulles arrived at the brink of war, as he avowedly believed in doing, Eisenhower repeatedly intervened to prevent hostilities. In 1954, after some $2 billion of military help had been poured into Indo-China to rescue the failing French, Dulles and Radford were ready to send our planes to fight at Dienbienphu; but Eisenhower would not approve. War was avoided, though it may be that Dulles' threats prevented Ho Chi Minh from taking all of Indo-China.

Earlier, Eisenhower had made peace in Korea, accepting stalemate there. These decisions against war need to be remembered gratefully in assessing Eisenhower's role. They were negative contributions, but precious ones. Thus we survived all the Dullesian thunders of "liberation," "roll-back," "massive retaliation" and "keep them guessing." Midway in 1958, our Armed Forces were flung out in all four directions — in many bomb flights across Canada into the Arctic to chase phantom radar blips and "hostile" meteorites; into the Caribbean, to be ready to rescue Vice President Nixon from Venezuelan mobs; to Lebanon to bolster or exploit the situation in that area after the defection of Iraq, kingpin of the Bagdad Pact; to the Formosa Straits during the second Formosa crisis. But even that hair-raising period was weathered without war.

This jabbing out in all four directions was sadly symbolic of the plight into which we had drifted by attempting to "contain" other great peoples on the other side of the world. Moreover, we escaped the final catastrophe in troubled 1958, only to be faced at once with the knottiest issue of all at Berlin. And Berlin still confronts us.

No Peace

Yet the saddest part of Eisenhower's record is his inability to make peace. This was not, either, because as a fine soldier and human being he did not understand the necessity. He often declared his horror of another war and, as noted above, he broke away from his cold-war ministers and went to the first Summit conference in 1955.

There his leadership was outstanding. He frankly admitted to being there "in response to a universal urge" to get away from universal fear. He convinced the Russians and the world that he wanted peace and regarded a nuclear war as an intolerable disaster, as they did. Nevertheless, a month later, on August 24, he was refusing to accept "a *status quo* in which we find injustice to many nations" and the next day Nixon called upon the Russians to dismantle the iron curtain, free the East European satellites and unite Germany and Korea on our side of the fence.

These demands for Soviet surrender were rejected in the Foreign Ministers' Conference in October, 1955. Mr. Dulles would not accept the *status quo* in Europe, though he adamantly defended it in the Far East. So a second cold war began and we skirted many brinks of war before the 1958-59 Berlin crisis brought us into an impasse again, after Dulles' death.

The Communist demand for a change in the status of West Berlin, making it into a "free city" and eliminating our power position there, brought many demands that, if necessary, we send armed convoys to Berlin. Second thoughts brought out the impracticability of ramming a way through the full power of the Russian Army.

Then, proposals for another airlift revealed that it would have to be very many times larger than in 1948-49. Since then we and the West Germans had built West Berlin into the greatest manufacturing city in all Germany. Now its inhabitants would expect a good diet and the

*There is also an item of $2.4 billion for private investment abroad. Our corporations are buying into the Common Market countries.

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continuance of their jobs, by maintaining the vast two-way shipment of raw materials and finished goods. Also the Soviets were now equipped with radar jammers which could probably disrupt a new airlift.

We were accordingly driven to another Foreign Ministers' Conference, in May, 1959, where it developed that the East would not be content with some reduction of our propaganda and espionage position at Berlin, 100 miles behind its lines. Our establishment of fixed and moving missile battalions in West Europe had made counter measures imperative; therefore our Berlin espionage center seemed intolerable to the Russian High Command. Moreover, the advancement of West Germany toward nuclear armament confronted the East with the gravest issue it could face.

WITH THE East having the power to throttle Berlin, Secretary of State Herter wisely decided to advise the President to invite Khrushchev to the United States and try negotiations at a higher level.

He came and at Camp David in late September, 1959, Eisenhower agreed that negotiations about Berlin "should not be prolonged indefinitely, though there should be no fixed time limit on them."

Actually the negotiations were postponed until they had been killed well before the U-2 affair frustrated the second Summit conference. Instead of holding the conference promptly, in the autumn of 1959, Eisenhower allowed everyone in the West, who did not want it to succeed, the leeway needed to block it.

Adenauer and de Gaulle demanded a Western Summit meeting and got it in late December, after which Adenauer declared that the concessions at Berlin previously indicated had been withdrawn. In mid-March, 1960, Adenauer was in Washington nailing down his veto. In the meantime de Gaulle, who had insisted on postponing any negotiations with Russia for a decade until West Europe could do the negotiating, had made use of the time to explode his A-bomb, receive a visit from Khrushchev and make triumphal tours of both London and the United States.

In Washington the elements in the Pentagon and the AEC which oppose both concessions at Berlin and the continued suspension of nuclear tests had full time to make their influence felt, and on April 4, Herter talked again about self-determination for East Germans. Then on April 21, Under Secretary of State Dillon said the same thing, with all possible bluntness, and restated the falling domino theory full strength. He laid down "the issue of peace and war."

BY MAY 5, everybody in the West, except Macmillan and Eisenhower, had come down heavily on the side of self-determination for East Germany and no concessions at Berlin. The Western Summit, Adenauer, de Gaulle, the State Department and the NATO Council all said the same thing. What had been beyond the bounds of practicality ever since 1945 — and increasingly so — was again solemnly proclaimed to be imperative.

During this seven-month eternity of delay and negation, Eisenhower had toured the world, going to India and then deep into Latin America, to create the atmosphere for making peace. In this he succeeded magnificently. He was acclaimed everywhere, both for himself and for his mission.

In New Delhi he put his finger on the root cause of the cold war, telling the cheering Indian Parliament that the tensions and fixations from which we suffer are "the creation of Governments, cherished and nourished by Governments. Nations would never feel them if they were given freedom from propaganda and pressure." Must we, he asked, "continue to live with prejudices, practices and policies that will condemn our children, our children's children, to live helplessly in the pattern of the past — awaiting possibly a time of war-borne obliteration"?*

The peoples, too, yearned for the peace he sought, but he furnished no leadership where it had to be exerted — on the governments and officials in his own camp. They were all left to vent fully the fixations and prejudices of the past. It sounds fair enough to say that in a democratic alliance, and government, everyone must have his say. So he must, but to accord him also a *librum veto* is to paralyze the alliance and render the government impotent.

Eisenhower's instincts were right. He knew that real progress toward peace should be made, and he created the proper atmosphere. But he lacked the ability to execute his policy. Affirmative leadership, to bring everybody on his side into line, or at least to demonstrate that he was committed to negotiate seriously, was lacking. Finally, even the suspension of the U-2 flights over Russia because of "these political negotiations," to quote Herter, was rejected, and Eisenhower was left to drift from one great humiliation in Paris to another at the gates of Tokyo.

He could and did avert war during his time, but he could not make peace, when the Soviet peoples deeply yearned for it. He also had opposite him in Khrushchev a leader who appeared to feel the same compulsions and who had staked his future on achieving a *détente*. Eisenhower could not take advantage of the opportunity, and he did not even attempt to make peace with China, though it is difficult to visualize a workable disarmament agreement, or peace, without China.

And What Now?

As 1961 opens, a young President waits in the wings of the world stage, one who is strongly committed to leadership. Will he lead us toward peace or into a perpetuation and intensification of the dangerous cold war?

The signs are conflicting. President-elect Kennedy has been quoted as believing that the loss of West Berlin would mean the loss of West Germany. I believe this to be a fallacy, *even if the worst happened.* However, what is immediately at stake is not the "loss" of an untenable outpost deep in "the enemy's" country, but tough negotiations to see if a new status for the city can preserve its essential freedoms —

*The writer was serving at the time as a Fulbright Lecturer at the Indian School of International Studies in New Delhi.

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negotiation with a Soviet leader who quite probably needs agreement on a changed status for Berlin, and on disarmament, if he is to maintain his leadership. Would we prefer really to lose West Berlin to a more Stalinist leader, or incur a world war? Eisenhower has been criticized for saying that the surrender of Berlin is "unthinkable" and that it is also unthinkable to fight a war for it, but is there not here an inescapable dilemma which compels negotiation and adjustment?

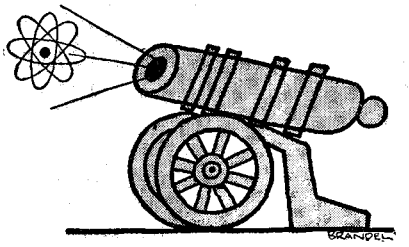
Kennedy has clearly indicated his belief that some adjustment is essential in the Formosa Strait. This, too, cannot be avoided, for as China becomes a nuclear power she will take control of her own central-door yard and leave to us the initiative for converting local war into the last world war. We shall live from one crisis to another, with no prospect of real peace, until there has been some recession of our power in these two "abnormal" and unnatural outposts. Nor does this mean that the "loss" of either, or both, would roll our power back to our shores. The London *Times* pointed out on November 30 that withdrawals from some of our "small and most politically sensitive bases would be a direct gain to the (NATO) alliance."

LOOKING IN A more hopeful direction, the London *Economist* for November 12 believes that Kennedy has absorbed fully the lesson of our being sucked into two world wars with a Democrat in the White House, and that the core of his claim is that by mobilizing all of the material and moral strength of the United States he can hope this time to save the peace.

This way offers real hope, if the emphasis is not too much on military mobilization and the exertion of will power. Nobody could have had stronger will power than Mr. Dulles, but he exhausted himself in holding far-flung lines, extruded further than the rising power of the Soviet Union and China made tenable.

What is urgently required is a deep realization that not only the Democrats but all of us are on trial for our lives, for the third and last time, and that if we fail to make peace and to move rapidly toward world community now we may never have another chance. Must we not hold our own in the world? Of course, we must hold what is really our own. And must we not continue to work for and believe in freedom? Certainly, but with much greater faith in the ability of all men to evolve in that direction.

The cold war has been played out for several years and it cannot be successfully revived. A perceptive correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* wrote from the United Nations on October 6 that



this is "an Assembly sick to death of the cold war," and that the new impetus toward neutralism is "the most virile political movement of our time, more forceful by far than the stale antipathies of East and West."

All around the world the peoples are striving to move toward a better life instead of a hydrogen death, toward greater control of their own destinies, greater exercise of their human dignity. Yet all of their aspirations must fail unless we can move away from conflict and toward cooperation and community. For fifteen years we have traveled again the ancient road of suspicion and fear, hate and arms rivalry, and it has not worked. Now it is time to try a little more trust and belief in our fellow men.

If Kennedy can move in this direction, above all if he makes real progress in disarmament, he will be a great President. Here, too, there is a strongly favored omen. Kennedy has said that he would not resume bomb testing unless the Russians did. This is one reason why our cold warriors insist continually that the Soviets may be cheating. It is the cessation of tests that frustrates the never-ending evolution of new supermiracles of destruction — that fatal progression which must lead to disaster, even if neither side consciously wants the final war. We should be keenly aware that if bomb tests are once resumed, it may be impossible ever to halt again the rush toward annihilation.

Unless we can move into real disarmament, all else will be in vain. We shall lack the resources to give our own people adequate public services, and to hold our own in the struggle with communism to help the underdeveloped peoples to help themselves — before the arms race ends in its appointed catastrophe.

CAN KENNEDY lead us in making peace? He has given us one strong promise that he will. At San Francisco on November 2, he said: "We can push a button to start the next war — but there is no push-button magic to bring a just and lasting peace. To be peace-loving is not enough — for the Sermon on the Mount saved its blessing for the peace*makers*. The generation for which I speak has seen enough of warmongers — let our great role in history be that of peacemakers."*

Every citizen ought to hold up the new President's hands in that endeavor. We have lingered in the self-defeating negations of the cold war far too long. It is high time that we moved out into the world as a positive, affirmative force for making and building peace, before oblivion falls on all of us.

Three years ago, on November 5, 1957, General of the Army Omar N. Bradley asked us: "How long can we put off salvation? When does humanity run out?" Then he warned: "Time is running against us with the speed of a Sputnik. If we are going to save ourselves from the instruments of our own intellect, we had better soon get ourselves under control and begin making the world safe for living."

As 1961 begins, it is still later than General Bradley thought. In these times three years spent without progress in organizing peace could well be decisive.

*Quoted from *The Progressive*, December, 1960.

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Comedy Before Tragedy

Richard Foster

THE QUESTION of the possibility of tragedy in our time is now an old one, but nevertheless still hardy and flourishing. It recurs in articles and discussions on the health of modern literature; college professors still talk to their students about it; novelists and playwrights grow irritable when critics tell them they have failed in their attempts to write tragedy; and everybody continues to cite Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch, who told us more than thirty years ago in *The Modern Temper* that tragic feeling and tragic understanding are beyond us because "we are an age too feeble to reach the heights." Little is said, oddly, about the comic understanding.

Mr. Krutch was voicing an agony which has prevailed in our literature since the end of the eighteenth century: the agony of the death of the capacity to feel which follows upon consciousness of the mutilation and death of belief. True tragedy, Mr. Krutch writes, is "a profession of faith, and a sort of religion"; and it is the willed "meanness" of modern man's disillusioned view of himself, resulting from his sense of God's withdrawal from the universe, that makes him incapable of receiving the almost religious solace and strength of tragedy. Shakespeare and Sophocles are "triumphant voices" from afar telling of a "heroic world that no longer exists," and saying futilely into our deafened ears that "Love and Honor and Glory are not words but realities."

And yet merely to read such passages is to hear a tragic note, to catch the likeness of a tragic gesture. For Mr. Krutch envisions the plight of modern man almost literarily as a "tragic" plight. His modern man, much more than just scrubbily and stupidly "mean," has the ability to *see*, with the eyes of history, the causes of this meanness, its significance and his painful incapacity to remedy it. In fact, he is very like the typical tragic hero at the denouement of his action, poised at the edge of the abyss with eyes open at last to the flaws of his judgment and will, and the ultimate fitness of his doom. Or *would-be* tragic —because there *is* no denouement. Modern man seems to have been left suspended at this crisis of self-knowledge, contemplating in pity and fear the unhappy truth of his historical destiny. When there is no fall there can be no catharsis; the fear subsides, leaving only the pity, which soon begins to nourish upon itself, growing into a persistent and self-satisfied sentimentality.

Regrets about the "impossibility" of tragedy in our time imply, at least, the more generalized sense of a diluted literary intelligence affecting all literary modes, whether tragic or comic. And this has indeed been, it seems to me, the prevailing condition in the main stream of our serious literature since the twenties. I emphasize "main stream" in order to allow for some distinction between the great and the influential when the two properties do not coincide. Consider the case of W. H. Auden, whose poetry from his Marxist through his Roman Catholic days has enunciated the humanistic principle that "we must love one another or die." This unassailable theme has rarely, in Auden's work, risen from the level of attitude to the level of idea. Critics have recognized that Auden is talented, technically brilliant, but not as great as his own principal masters, Yeats and Eliot. Yet he has had a far more widespread and continuing influence on contemporary poetry than they have had, in spite of their recognized greatness. Or consider Hemingway, whose humanistic themes have been very like Auden's in both meaning and depth, and whose influence on fiction, though now waning, has been about as great as Auden's on poetry. Or Faulkner, who, just at the moment of his widest popular recognition and most extensive influence upon younger writers, is being regaled with the doubtful second thoughts of the critical intelligentsia that once hailed him as our greatest novelist.

It seems to have been his famed Nobel acceptance speech that marked the turning point for Faulkner. For in that speech he told the world (without any of the earned moral context and consequent force of meaning that the same affirmation carried at the end of *The Sound and the Fury* when it was applied to Dilsey) that man, in spite of war, the greed of nations, planned social injustice, famine, nuclear explosions, global radiation belts, erupting race hatreds, brainwashing, economic cannibalism, and the universal moral illiteracy of the literate, would in some meaningful sense "endure." The affirmation was naturally delightful to the beneficiaries, good or bad, of any *status quo*, just or unjust. Faulkner's words were quoted as gospel in the popular magazines, enunciated from Sunday pulpits, taken into the hearts of the book-club bourgeoisie. The past master of sex, violence and difficult sentences had suddenly become a sweet-tempered father figure to the nation, and suddenly the syntax of his comfortingly vague message of cheer and approval was perfectly clear. It is the very same message as that of Mr. Krutch's humanism sung once again, but now it is sung in a major key. And I wonder if the condition referred to as the "impossibility" of tragedy in our time has not been sustained as much by the currency of exactly this kind of intellectually slack and emotionally urgent humanism as it has by the anti-human forms of modern thought and society which the humanism is in conscious reaction against.

THE ruling mode of response in Mr. Krutch's twenties and thirties was protest in despair: the fist of the fallen raised in righteous condemnation. And when Mr. Krutch cries, despairing, What have we done to our image of our humanity!, he is registering faith, by means of the negative idiom of his time, in the nobility of that very image. Our current mode of response is "positive," and though we still take pride in our gestures of protest ("nonconformity"), we are fond of the words "compromise," "patience" and "moderation."

Perhaps one could fairly project both the continuities and the differences between the two eras in this way: in the twenties and thirties the humanism was the background and motive of protest; but in the forties and fifties it took an affirmative foreground position, and protest went to the background as a ready validating symbol of the truth, sophistication and wisdom of that affirmation. Take as examples O'Neill's *Anna Christie* and Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman.*

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In each case, doomed aspiration is the issue: in *Anna Christie* we are left with the sense of guilty social and natural orders condemned for their betrayal and destruction of human value; but in *Death of a Salesman* the concluding "Requiem" leaves us with a sense of the surviving human value that rises affirmatively from the destroyed life and dreams of Willie Loman. The plays are equally sentimental in that the emotional demands of each in behalf of their shared humanism far outstrip the *meaning* of that humanism. Anna's human nature is so single and mechanical and repetitively self-explaining that she becomes unbelievable and therefore invalid as a spokesman for our own actual predicaments. And Willie Loman's personal values are ultimately so confused with those of the enemy Society that when their praises are sung at the end of the play, its whole intellectual structure collapses into meaninglessness.

The failure of both these quasi-humanistic pseudo-tragedies can be traced, I suppose, straight back to Ibsen. For it is not the "meanness," as Mr. Krutch would have it, of the Ibsenesque vision, but its *sentimentality* that makes Oswald less a tragic figure than Hamlet. *Hamlet* is a complex enactment of human thought and feeling that invites a difficult and painful human response; *Ghosts* is a mechanical illustration of an absurdly simplistic idea that insists upon uncritical assent and a pitying wag of the head. The difference between *Hamlet* and *Ghosts* is that where *Hamlet* is "real" *Ghosts* is, in a special modern way, "literary." It is consciously and mechanically illustrative of a core principle of modern disillusionist faith. And when the literary artist becomes an example-monger in the service of some abstraction, it means the death of free intelligence, and certainly of the sort of humanism capable of tragic imagination. Pre-World War II American literature was unhappily rich in writers of this kind — the weightiest, and probably the worst, of them being Theodore Dreiser. I can think of no writer of his sort since World War II who has attained anything approaching his rank as a "serious" writer.

BUT we have our weaknesses now, too, certain false substitutes for the real thing, some of which we share with the twenties: literary rhetoric for one, and another, what I will call for want of a neater designation, literary "construction." The idea of style is to be respected, because style is the tone of the writer's individual conscience. And therefore, whether that style is by nature simple or complex, stock rhetoric, when it is yielded to, becomes an occasion of intellectual, perhaps even moral, collapse. One thinks of the cumbersome "philosophic" passages in O'Neill and Miller, whose most real and valid moments are those of common-life talk — the everyday language of casual quarrels, petty grievances, trivial pleasure, gossip, complaint and idle yearning. Or of Tennessee Williams, whose sympathetic characters, even in his best plays, too often talk as if they had read too much bad Tennessee Williams. In recent years, Faulkner's celebrated "style" has begun to sound unconvincingly loud, repetitive, insistent — an artifice of words cloaking an enfeebled meaning; and he has tended to be widely imitated at his worst. And Hemingway many times betrayed himself into falsity by falling into the self-conscious rhetoric of sentimental anti-rhetoric, just as Jack Kerouac has done more recently in the baby talk of his fake literary vagabondry.

Literary rhetoric as a mechanical substitute for the style of an individual imagination is often accompanied by a second kind of machinery, literary "construction." There are certain traditional literary forms — for example, epic, picaresque and, of course, tragic — whose very recognition can be counted on to rouse certain standardized literary expectations and responses. There are also suggestively symbolic patterns of action which are seen as "archetypal," and as carrying the moral and metaphysical significances of "myth." Both kinds of construction represent the translation of traditions and beliefs that were once instinctively felt components of actual life into the willed mechanisms of "technique." And such willed mechanizing is a great temptation to the "serious" artist in a period of disenchantment. It is not surprising that the fiction of Graham Greene, James Gould Cozzens and Robert Penn Warren, all of whom are conscious "traditionalists" in an untraditional time, should rely so frequently on prefabricated literary form and content.

When integrity and intelligence are in touch with real matter, traditional forms and structures may be an enrichment rather than a hazard, as Faulkner at his best—in "The Bear," for example —is capable of proving. A major writer's weak moments — such as the "Christ myth" elements in Faulkner's *Light in August* and *A Fable*—are often mechanical imitations of his great moments. You cannot mechanically imitate a moment of profound insight or feeling, but you can imitate the surface of its accidental form. It is usually only this that followers of a major writer are capable of doing. William Styron, one of Faulkner's best-known younger imitators, has recently published his second novel, *Set This House on Fire*. Though it is less exclusively Faulknerian than his first novel, it is perhaps even more obviously a product of abstract literary intentions and the mechanical operations of "technique." As an astonishing combination of cheaply sensational matter and false literary mannerisms, it is,

Reflections
(to the tune of "Tit-Willow")
on the hazards of

Celestial Politics

God, said the Bishops, considers it sin
To vote in the voting for Muñoz-Marín,
Sing Bishop, Archbishop, Archbishop.

But God, when the vote in the voting was done,
Bestowed the blue sea and the sky and the sun,
Sing Bishop,
Just as though Muñoz-Marín *hadn't* won.
Archbishop,
Archbishop.

The moral is something like this (and I quote):
When the Church tells the people how God means to vote—
Sing Bishop, Archbishop, Archbishop.

It had better begin, not by damning their souls,
But by taking a couple of Galluping polls
In Heaven,
High Heaven,
High Heaven.

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

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quite possibly, the worst "serious" novel of the decade. But it is nevertheless of interest as a virtual paradigm of our recent literature's pretentiousness of art and falsity of content — the characteristic elegance, artifice, sentimentality and technical skill, the "professionalism," which is, I believe, unequaled by any other era in Anglo-American literature.

And I can't but feel that it was the very spirit of yearning enunciated by Mr. Krutch in the more innocent year of 1929 that helped bring us to this pass. A time dominated by a harshly reductive and often crudely expressed naturalism yearned perhaps not so much for a humanistic deepening of imagination as for a return to the artful, the elegant, the recognizably "literary." That, at least, is what it got for its pains.

AT ANY RATE, it seems unwise of Mr. Krutch to have limited his own view to tragedy, and that of his readers to a choice between its Shakespearean and Ibsenesque varieties. While it is probably true that the drama for the past two hundred years has tended, with only a few exceptions, to disqualify itself from consideration as literature, there are other areas of literature, areas perhaps more richly productive in the twenties than in any other decade of our century. By 1929, the year of Mr. Krutch's dirge, we had had Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), Mann's *The Magic Mountain* (1924), Kafka's *The Trial* (1925, though not translated into English until 1937), Ford's Tietjens tetralogy (1924-1928), much of the major poetry of Yeats and Eliot, not to mention the whole of Conrad, and the major work of Lawrence, Gide, Shaw, Pound and a host of other great figures. And I am struck by the fact that for most of these very greatest of modern writers, though the tragic sense hovered continually close, the substance of human experience in the modern world was for them, however seriously, complexly, profoundly they grasped it, essentially *comic*. It seems to have been the lesser writers of the period who insisted upon the tragic as the necessary form of high seriousness, and it seems to have been they who failed Mr. Krutch.

I can't imagine very precisely what will "come next," but I wonder if a rather long age of melodrama qualified by whimsy is not now undergoing purgation by a renaissance of true comedy qualified by a true tragic sense. It is as if writers are instinctively beginning to slough off the accumulation of a generation's literary falsity and trying to feel their way back to the integrity of vision possessed by the great writers of the twenties. The signs are all around us — and not least in the remarkable coincidence of critical praise and popularity in the cases of most of the writers I am about to name. Samuel Beckett, for example. Perhaps he will finally be seen as a rather pretentious nothing; but he is of immediate interest, at least, in his having rejected all ready-made forms of modern literary high seriousness in order to come up with modestly surreal stories and plays that though, like the medieval miracle plays, they are sometimes a bit boring, are more often, again like the miracle plays, refreshingly funny and genuinely touching.

Beckett's significance is a negative one, I think — the significance of a serious artist rejecting the decadent techniques of bogus artistic seriousness at a time when such rejection is peculiarly needed. This is perhaps the significance, too, in a less radical and conscious extreme, of the Ethnic Revivalists and the Beats in America, and of the Angries in England. All three movements or "schools" seem to have slid rather quickly into the corruptions of whimsy and self-exploitation. But there were certain writers and certain books that brought fresh ways of sensing our world — the somber ethnic moodiness of Saul Bellow's *The Victim*; the intelligent, farcical nihilism of Kingsley Amis' *Lucky Jim*; and even certain moments of coarse, hilarious joy in Kerouac's *On the Road*.

Two of the most overrated good books of the past few years have been Philip Roth's *Goodbye Columbus* and Lawrence Durrell's Alexandria Quartet. Roth had a veritable parade of important American writers and critics singing his praises, and wound up with a National Book Award. Durrell, who caused Lionel Trilling to look into his own soul once again, has had international praise, and is now in his ninth printing. At least half of the stories in Roth's book were contrived and heavy-handed in the most cumbersome literary manner, and tended to fall victim to the currently fashionable ethnic whimsy cited above; and Durrell's books feed upon the corny, adolescent self-analysis of characters whose dullness and affectation would tempt you in real life to boot them out of the house. And yet both writers break through again and again with genuine humor and genuine feeling — perhaps the two humane qualities least often found in the midst of the stock literary "compassion" that we are used to. In Roth's title story, and his fine second, "Defender of the Faith," one is almost bowled over by the discovery that the comic spirit, explored with a strict simplicity and reserve, can be so powerful a vehicle of moral revelation. And in Durrell's novels, as one reads and reads and reads through their slow and elegant growth, one slowly awakens to their remarkable aura of natural human warmth. In place of the abstract sex and stock loud-voiced savagery that we have become used to as the mark of certain "serious" fiction (especially Southern serious), Durrell has discovered love, and with a marvelous humane patience has detailed the amazing variety of its possible harmonies; even his perverts and villains are in the end rather touching.

ROTH and Durrell are important for having released in their work a refreshing naturalness of human conscience and feeling. And they are complemented by other writers whose special talents have enabled them to release certain formal aspects of craft from the imprisonments of "technique" and imitation: William Golding, for example, as a very successful modern revitalizer of allegory (and more recently, in *Free Fall*, of picaresque); or Angus Wilson, who, with his dry and compendious social intelligence, has brought comedy of manners to life again as a form of serious social and moral criticism; or J. F. Powers, who in his stories of the American Catholic clergy has done the virtually impossible by bringing an orthodox theological vision to bear, and with moving validity, on the way we live now. Perhaps Powers' only equal as an essentially "religious," if non-theological, writer is J. D. Salinger. In the light of Mr. Krutch's humanistic ideal — a religious conception of man's value and dignity — Salinger is perhaps the most deeply committed humanist now writing; in his superb stories, and somewhat less successfully in the celebrated *Catcher in the Rye*, he affirms man's ultimate capacity, beyond the distractions of despair, perversion, pettiness and cruelty, for "goodness." His medium is comedy, and he escapes the sentimental falsity and coyness of such affirmers as Saroyan and Thornton Wilder, by submitting both his humanism and his art to the test of actuality: we *live* in the world he writes about. And I must also cite Vladimir Nabokov, a brilliant writer who is not so much the opposite as the complement to everything that Powers and Salinger instinctively represent. In *Lolita* especially, but also in *Laughter in the*

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Dark and some of his short stories, he has experimented radically with comedy and tragedy as polar modes of imagination, pushing each to the limits of its tolerance and decorum. As Salinger's stories add up to a humanistic testament to man, Nabokov's *Lolita*, in its harshly comic perception of gross mechanical corruption and its deeply tragic perception of the love perversely capable of growing out of that very corruption, is a radical testing and defining and proving-out of comedy and tragedy as permanently valid *forms* of the deepest humanistic awareness.

The writers I have been praising, all of whom have transcended the ruling literary manners of their time, have had in common a natural comic sense, and have employed that comic sense in behalf of an always serious and intelligent, and at times rebellious, humanistic criticism of life. And I think that our literature for some years now has stood in need of exactly the kind of purgation and revitalizing of intelligence that the comic spirit alone can provide. We must have *that*, after all, before there is any point in indulging ourselves in a tragic yearning for the tragic. For though tragedy is the ultimate illumination of comedy, comedy is the inescapable discipline of tragedy. Man has to *deserve* tragedy, and it is the guts and brains required by comedy, rather than any artificial cultivation of high thoughts and the heroic principle, that can most truly prepare us now to deserve.

The Boys in the Sub-Basement

THE WORLD OF HALDEMAN-JULIUS: Selected Writings of H.-J. Compiled with an introduction by Albert Mordell. Twayne Publishers. 288 pp. $4.

Benjamin DeMott

FANTASIES of bookishness and "free thought" flourish mainly in youth. Domestic responsibility and the pursuit of the possible kill them off rapidly, and most of the people in whom they survive are shy unwanton types, able to propitiate their inner muse with a subscription to *The Reporter* and membership in the Book Find Club. There are exceptions, though: a tough-grained, more-or-less-adult minority that is not paid to write or teach or even to think, but that nevertheless founds its whole sense of distinction on *literariness*. An elite without a status, the group is marked, psychologically, by extremes of pride and shame. It is contemptuous of the mass of socially respectable people who take books lightly if at all, and suspicious of the "official" literary class, which has obvious logs to roll. Its prime activity is a search for unique reading matter and unheard-of causes and heroes, and the search sometimes ends in lunacy.

The World of Haldeman-Julius celebrates its hero, a figure of various career who deserves to be thought of as a publishing genius, in a way that directs attention away from the man to his admirers—and the latter, fantasts all, have much in common with the group just described. Their nature and interests can be deduced in part from their brief appearances, as correspondents to be answered, in the pieces by Haldeman-Julius (reprinted from the *American Freeman*, a "monthly journal of opinion and comment") which make up the bulk of the present text. A literary lady writes from a Colorado mountain shack to say "that the sheriff of her county has been bothering her because she lives by herself and keeps 20 dogs." A man named Karl V. Teeter of Lexington, Mass., "who plays in a concert band," objects to H.-J.'s opinions about music. "Mike C. Schiffer" of Kenyon College claims that he too is against Henry Luce and for Henry Miller, and that he is no highbrow jazz critic, but that he sure likes "the brilliant, ultra-refined . . . efforts of Lennie Tristano, whose integrity is culminated in a Capitol release, 'Intuitions'. . . ." Harry Golden, who contributes a friendly foreword, is obviously not wholly of the guild; his sentences often parse. But his case is an exception. The true H.-J.-ite is a senseless exaggerator (one headnote to the book compares H.-J. unblinkingly with Montaigne) whose chief claims are a wide acquaintance among famous men of whom one has not heard, and an inability to write English.

That his idolators had their limitations does not, of course, alter the fact that Haldeman-Julius was a warm-spirited, good-humored and interesting man. Best known as the publisher of the Little (3½ x 5 inches) Blue Books, paperback reprints of "all the famous authors from Aesop to Zarilla," he was the son of a Jewish immigrant bookbinder from Odessa, who settled in Philadelphia. H.-J. left high school as a boy to contribute to the support of his family, held a succession of miscellaneous jobs, joined the Socialist party, worked for a number of Socialist papers in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, and at length (in 1914) bought *The Appeal to Reason*, a national Socialist paper published in Girard, Kansas. Conceiving the idea of cheap reprints, he handed the printer two books (*The Rubaiyat* and *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*) and told the man to print them in 8-point type 16 ems wide on newspaper stock, and then he circularized 175,000 subscribers and former subscribers to the paper. The response was extraordinary from the start. By the early thirties H.-J. had a thousand titles on his list, including original work of Margaret Sanger, Clarence Darrow, Will Durant, Upton Sinclair, Bertrand Russell and Havelock Ellis; in twenty years he sold more than three hundred million booklets at five cents each.

There was a time when achievement of this kind stirred only distaste among the knowing: a noisy iconoclast selling Goethe for a nickel, in an ugly text, to an audience of cretins. Nowadays, though, that line is plainly ridiculous, and even if it were not there would still be much reason for looking back with affectionate regard upon H.-J.'s business. It was a self-help program un-

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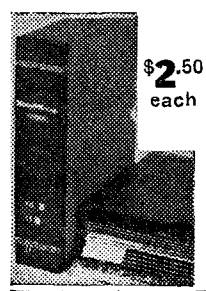

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scarred by the high organizational pretentiousness of the foundations' Great Books seminars. It somehow gave reality to the great American myth of self-education, suggested visions of ambitious, unjaded farm boys perusing Plato by candlelight, instead of, as now, studying synonyms to improve their CEB scores. It offered a paperback list of titles whose instant familiarity may well seem treasurable to book buyers graveled by the profusion (in present-day paperback shops) of "insightful readings" of the classics by Ernst Gavotch. In fact, the Blue Book library stood for a time of innocence in American education, and, perhaps, for a moment when publishing had some tangential connection with public service.

BUT THE man who ran the business was no writer. He poured forth millions of words, for he valued his prolificacy no less than his fame as a man of daring ("What would the world's history have been had there never been any ruined girls?"). But his writing was third-rate — flat, vulgar and dull.

It may or may not be true that Haldeman-Julius, the publisher, created rather than merely satisfied the audience of square *philosophes* who mistook him for Montaigne—but there can be no doubt that he was its master. The key to his mastery was his skill in presenting himself as an open, untutored man more learned than the learned—this, and his ability to suggest (as in his account of his ejection from the Chicago Museum Art School) that organized "culture" is organized only to keep the truths of art in the possession of people with Formal Credentials. The latter suggestion will probably never lose its insinuating power. People in thralldom to it, and to the fantasies of learning and lit-ryness mentioned before, usually teach themselves only to despise their own true gifts, and thereby ruin themselves. But one or two in each generation teach themselves something else — a violent hostility to "the way things intellectually are" that in many instances has set off heroic endeavor. H.-J. was not a hero, even his iconoclasm is stale. But he may well have been a cause of heroism in others, and for that reason — one rarely citable in the case of publishers — it will be a while yet before his memory disappears.

Art for Morality's Sake

THE INSIDERS. By Selden Rodman. Louisiana State University Press. 130 pp. 77 illustrations. $6.95.

Fairfield Porter

THIS BOOK takes a moral stand against the dominant school of art and art criticism, in favor of art which calls "attention to the unspeakable degradation of the *individual.*" "In his search for values that give meaning to life, the Insider does not divorce man as an individual from man as a social participant." He believes that the "full development of man . . . requires the rational evolution of *both* thought and feeling." Camus is quoted on the title page as follows: "The error of modern art lies most often, in giving priority to the means over the ends, to form over content, to technique over subject-matter."

The dominant school of modern art does indeed often express the idea that the end you achieve hatches out of the means you employ. Does the choice of art as a profession come from the special nature of the artist's experience, or from his desire to give form to experience? Technique is a petty word; I prefer style, which is the man, and which takes precedence because any subject will do. An artist who seeks subject matter is like a person who cannot get up in the morning until he understands the purpose of life. Subject matter is given: in his field and in his capacity as artist, the artist seeks grace.

Selden Rodman finds painting the dominant art of the West since the last war. He is sympathetic toward *avant-garde* painting and sculpture, and he seems unaware of any paradox in finding it both alive and lacking content. But in spite of its popularity and the fact that, as Rodman says, a great deal of talent has been attracted into creating it, he finds it dehumanized, contemptuous of the audience, contemptuous of the individual, formalistic and self-absorbed—all of which, in his words, causes the "Philistine" millions to identify art with irresponsibility. But what of the huge audience for this formalistic art? What does Rodman make of their interest? These thousands must have been reached, to be interested; and if, like Rodman, they identify art with irresponsibility, and still admire it, it could be because this irresponsibility seems more realistic than the phony responsibilities presented to them.

The Insider is someone "drawn to values outside himself strongly enough to examine them in his work." He is concerned with "the human condition" expressed in "some form of representational imagery, or . . . in an aesthetic vocabulary evocative of that condition." Since humanism expresses "man's will to be godlike in tragic conflict with his bestiality and mortality, the Insider steeps himself in tradition." Presumably respect for tradition prompted Lebrun, an Insider, to copy Goya's *Family of Charles IV.* A reproduction of this restatement is included among the illustrations. Lebrun has added some De Kooning-like lines over the composition of an artist who detested lines because he did not see them in nature. Rodman would like artists to look outside themselves and to respect individuality, as I suppose he thinks Kearns does, whose drawing, *Seven Viewers on a Wall,* is reproduced. The subject is children observing the aftermath of an automobile accident, and it contains, seven times over, the standardized monster, four heads high, that is Kearns's creation. (Why do so many Insiders use this nineteenth-century cartoon convention?) It expresses a shaggy geometry. Rodman calls Cuevas the heir of Orozco. Cuevas' distortions show an adolescent disgust with the adult world. Often the distortions that are meaningful to Rodman look like affectations to me. The bronzes of Baskin, "poet of death," have a beautiful and subtle surface, and his wood engravings show beautiful control —all for a subject matter that is so much camp. Do his fat bald men mean death, as their titles claim, or do they mean the murder, by making it repulsive, of the artist's sensuality?

RODMAN opposes "art for art's sake." If art is not valuable first of all in itself — which is what "art for art's sake" means — it is valuable for a reflection of greater values. Orozco, "the first and still the greatest of the Insiders," was less interested in art than in the subject; art was what he used toward an end. But the lesser Insiders whom Rodman admires use morality to excuse art, as an apology for being artists. They deny art for art's sake, and use morality for the sake of their careers. Their "compassion" looks like self-pity for their denial of their natural sensuousness. Instead of being anxious about man's fate, they seem to be anxious about whether it is all right for them to have chosen to be artists.

Speaking of the divorce between the

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artist and his public in contemporary music, Rodman describes the motives of "formalist" composers in this way: "Contempt for the audience and withdrawal into esoteric forms are only symptoms, self-protective attire the artist assumes when he has already lost conviction in what he has to say." But are not the Insiders' distortions and visions of violence a self-protective attire assumed to convince themselves of their humanity and to hide artistic emptiness? Instead of being a sign of vitality, their violence looks like a measure of the incompleteness of their commitment. And maybe, what in the "formalist" *avant-garde,* looks like contempt for the audience, is a refusal to make irrelevant concessions. Maybe the artist who seems to be interested only in technique, seems so because he takes his content for granted: his subject matter takes care of itself. The Insiders protest too much.

THEATRE

Harold Clurman

A REMARKABLY integrated, devoted, well-chosen company of actors opened off-Broadway last week in a play called *Borak* by a young playwright, Robert Hock. The press on the whole was respectful of the script, regarding it as a promising first effort, though insufficiently impressed, it seemed to me, with the excellence of the ensemble acting. The production was announced to close in two weeks. The pre-Christmas weeks are a very perilous time to open a play — particularly off-Broadway.

Otto Preminger also was daring: that is his chief asset. He opened *Critic's Choice* by Ira Levin with Henry Fonda, Mildred Natwick and Virginia Gilmore (Ethel Barrymore). These actors are thorough professionals and Miss Gilmore looks yummy in her informal come-hither clothes by Oleg Cassini.

This play is about a critic whose wife writes a play — what a bold subject! — which her husband pans. It has some funny lines, including intramural jokes about the so-called theatre. *Critic's Choice* is not difficult to watch with such attractive people on the stage, but it gave me time to think of contiguous matters.

For instance: why are nearly all plays about the stage so embarrassing? Even people who know the theatre well — say, Clifford Odets in *The Country Girl* — write lines and scenes about stage life which strike one as glaringly pretentious or false. Perhaps it shows that most stage folk are ineradicably romantic, with an attitude toward the stage which is closer to that of the innocent, beglamorized spectator than to that of the sober craftsman. It is as if the American theatre professional never feels himself really part of the theatre (*in* the theatre) but somehow hankers for a theatre that exists somewhere beyond the horizon. (In the same way, many Irishmen living in Ireland seem to dream of Ireland.)

Then, too, I mused upon the sentiment about drama critics which appears to prevail now in theatre circles. I attended a conference on drama criticism some weeks ago and the atmosphere seemed to breathe a kind of tepid adulation toward our drama critics. In this our worst season in recent memory I too am beginning to feel sorry for them. For if our theatre keeps along the path it has taken of late there will be nothing left of it but the critics.

A final observation in this connection: in Mr. Levin's piece a large part of the critic's review of his wife's play is read aloud. It is sensationally funny. Max Beerbohm and Bernard Shaw in collaboration could not have devised anything so funny. Any reviewer *that* funny ought to be fired: he is not a critic at all — he confuses his function with that of the comic.

EVEN the musicals are disappointing. Richard Nash (with Cy Coleman: music, and Carolyn Leigh: lyrics) has written one, *Wildcat*, for Lucille Ball (Alvin). It takes place in a Texas border town and it's about the thirst for oil — and love.

It's not "bad": it's just not much of anything. Michael Kidd (director, choreographer and co-producer) is a highly talented man who has here contributed very little of his talents — although what he does contribute furnishes the best bits of the show. At several points I thought the composer was close to an effective number, but hadn't quite enough musicianship to bring it off. (The musical comedy composers of the twenties, the thirties and the forties had their specific tone because these periods all had their individual "melody" or character; the fifties were something of a washout and musically almost featureless in terms of the stage.) There is a trick scenic effect by Peter Larkin — the construction of an oil derrick — which has a baby excitement. Lucille Ball attracts by virtue of a certain quality of gameness in her personality.

A Merry Christmas and a Happier New Year!

MUSIC

Lester Trimble

THE HALLMARK HALL OF FAME, which in past seasons has given color TV productions of Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, launched a new American "Christmas" opera on December 16. The work was *Golden Child*, by composer Philip Bezanson and librettist Paul Engle. It was not only bad — it was disgraceful.

Indeed, I can think of only one way to justify this event. If a national poll of audience opinion were taken on *Golden Child*, it would provide so much information about standards of public musical taste and attitudes toward the lyric theatre that it might prevent future debacles of this sort. Foundation money could very usefully be spent for this purpose, and it ought to be done at once, before memory has faded.

To Messrs. Bezanson and Engle, who are both faculty members at the State University of Iowa, it may be that the history of the American West and of the California gold rush are of vital personal interest. I will not suspect either of them, or the producers of *Golden Child*, of trying to cash in on a supposed public hunger for Americana. But even if the choice of period and locale was based on honest preference, did it not occur to anybody that the Americana vein — which was a thin one to begin with — has been mined so assiduously for many years that it is well-nigh exhausted? Did nobody connected with the enterprise know that it is

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aesthetically dishonest to gather up a bushel of clichés and offer it to the public as art?

My objection to Americana is that it has been so overworked as to be, in itself, a cliché. And it has been for a long time. You can present only so many hoe-downs before the idea of hoe-down is worn out. You can show only so many weary pioneers perishing in the mountain snow or desert heat before that idea becomes a mockery. And you can see only so many Gift of the Magi sequences without retching; only so many child characters crooning over their miserable dollies, so many loose women regaining their purity when confronted by the stage virtues of Mary, Mother of God types. These, precisely, were the ingredients of *Golden Child.*

THE OPERA opens on a drunken, Christmas Eve hoe-down given for the miners and their girls by Captain Sutter, a real religious guy who hates liquor and Christmas Eve hoe-downs. His house looks like a hotel, or maybe a dance hall. The girls on his guest list are bad, and the men are greedy. Gold made them that way. (Captain Sutter hates gold.) After quieting a few brawls (there's a Mexican in the crowd, and the crowd hates Mexicans), he tosses a pouch of gold-dust to the gang to play with.

The atmosphere of sin having been nailed down, the scene changes. We see the interior of a covered wagon, way up in the mountains. Outside, it is snowing. Inside, Mommy and little daughter wriggle nervously beneath the blankets. They are cold. Birdie hops around on its perch and makes its wicker cage bounce against the wall. At first, I thought a window was leaking and the wind was blowing the cage around. Then I thought the wagon was moving. But the text explained that it was really birdie kicking up all the fuss.

Poppa has gone out into the snow, and his tracks are getting covered. Mommy is worried; so is little girlie. She runs outside to look, and Mommy runs after. What seems at first to be a horrible snow man turns out to be Poppa. Girlie's scream leads him home. He has decided they've got to cut out for California, 'cause the snow is too cold, and food's low. Girlie finds a shiny stone to make a head for scrap dollie. (It's gold, folks, but don't tell anybody.) Girlie tosses birdie into air. Birdie *naturally* heads west, so they know which way to go. Slight argument about luggage ends with Mommy's Bible going into the brief case. (Symbolic!)

The last part of the opera takes place at Captain Sutter's. Poppa, Mommie, girlie stagger in out of the snow. Mommie's pregnant. Miners and girls don't like them. They snatch dollie and assay her head. GOLD! CLAIM JUMPERS! (Accusations.) No bedrooms left at Captain Sutter's. Family must go to barn. Poppa says he likes cows better than these people, anyway. Gang batters down door. Wants to attack crèche. Baby born. Sun rises. ("Life turns to light.") Gang finds Bible in brief case and gets the point. Gives gifts (worn-out coat; deerskin pouch of gold dust; string of beads; etc.). Baby shown to camera. Loose women get unloose. Ensemble song: "In this new land we make our start, with friends, faith, and loving heart."

AND WHAT about the music? To call it uninspired would be flattering. There were no melodies, no distinctive harmony, no interesting rhythm or color. In the sense that *Time* recently described a certain kind of literary effort as "non-book," this score could be called "non-music." It simply filled time. The background music for the commercials was perhaps a little better — being unpretentious.

Not surprisingly, the performers hired for this expensive, appalling affair were top-flight musicians, and they all did splendid jobs. Jerome Hines was Captain Sutter; Stephen Douglass, Poppa; Patricia Neway, Mommie; Judy Sanford, girlie; Brenda Lewis, Sara, a loose woman; John Wheeler, the caller. Peter Herman Adler was the musical director. I have nothing but praise for the performance.

I did not, however, find the sets effective. The scene in the mountains, despite my best efforts, kept reminding me of the W. C. Fields movie with the famous lines, "T'ain't a fit night out for man nor beast." Captain Sutter's digs, if not laughable, were less than convincing.

The real tragedy of this production, however, was that it put before a potentially huge American audience, and one which might possibly learn to take pleasure in good lyric theatre, a work which will be accepted as representative of what is going on in that field. One need not blame the composer and librettist. They, doubtless, wrote as well as they could. But for a group of first-class singers, a leading conductor, and whoever was in charge from Hallmark and from George Schaefer's Compass Productions — for a group of such professionals to collaborate in putting so inferior a product before the public is shameful.

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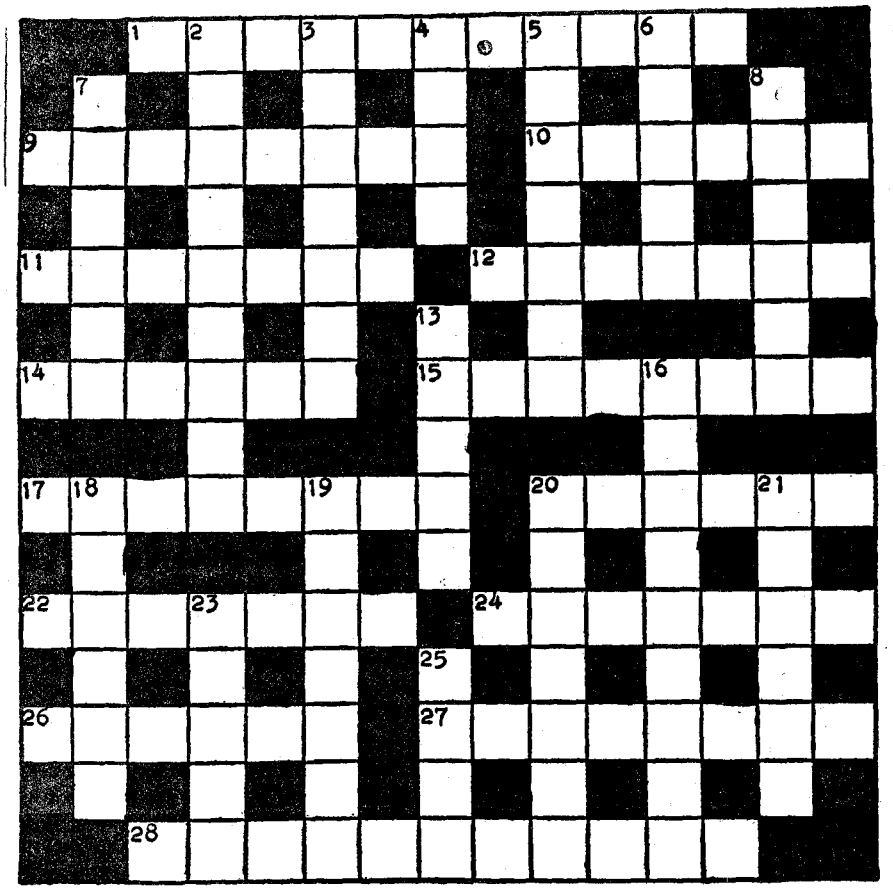
Crossword Puzzle No. 896

By FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS:

1 Some lines, it seems, of ceremony. (11)
9 It's a denunciation of all the articles mother comes by. (8)
10 Crazy dame an attendant of Bacchus gave an order to. (6)
11 The manner of hoodlums in passage? (7)
12 and 26 What amateur philatelists might be doing with a merchandising gimmick. (7, 6)
14 Ratisbon stormers were. (6)
15 Everything comes to naught, by the way, for one who treats us rather differently. (8)
17 Superseded. (8)
20 One who doesn't eat less slowly? (6)
22 Critical. (7)
24 Markets a very bad poem, set to an equally bad air. (7)
26 See 12 across
27 The Roman statesman who gained an ingot of mineral? (8)
28 Bomb, as the opponents of Mr. Keaton said they would? (11)

DOWN:

2 Descriptive of four simultaneous baseball games? (9)
3 Look at the cat-o-nine-tails! (7)
4 Cattle without water or anything? (4)
5 Vehicle noted for the paucity of round-trip passengers. (7)
6 One sees them ending without finding a thing correct. (5)
7 Not an honest brunette? (6)
8 Stone fish trap? (6)
13 See 25 down
16 Ended talk of the minister's position? (9)
18 Press goofs? (6)
19 Edward Bulwer Lytton said this literature is always modern. (7)
20 Promotes men in soft but uneasy surroundings. (7)
21 Sprung out of jail, he still proved a leader. (6)
23 The shape of Hamlet's cloud. (5)
25 and 13 Not the Laureates of the Union, though they carried weapons. (9)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 895

ACROSS: 1 Robert Browning; 9 Chimera; 10 Deviate; 11 Mud packs; 12 Ornate; 14 and 15 Pitcher plant; 17 Eased; 19 Chipped; 23 Carriers; 25 Chiliad; 26 In limbo; 27 That's the spirit! DOWN: 1 Recombine; 2 Build up; 3 Reenacted; 4 Blank check; 5 Odds; 6 and 21 across Never say die; 7 Niagara; 8 Mere; 13 Irratative; 15 Paper clip; 16 Transport; 18 Stylish; 20 Dreamer; 21 Sock; 22 Idiot; 24 Adit.

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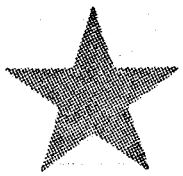

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